

CPYRGHT

FOIAb3b

New Lodge Aide Man of Legend For Bolstering Diem's Regime

**Lansdale, Insurgency Expert,
Said to Have Played Key
Role in Saigon in 1954**

CPYRGHT

Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Aug. 18—Edward G. Lansdale, once a much sung operative of the Central Intelligence Agency and now a retired Air Force major general, will bring with him eight to 10 aides when he comes here to serve as a special assistant to Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, official United States sources said today.

When he made a rather legendary reputation in Asia in the nineteen-fifties Mr. Lansdale had a famous "Lansdale team," which included experienced, well-informed and hard-boiled intelligence experts.

It could not be learned today who would be on his new team.

It was reported here that a cablegram from the State Department had said Mr. Lansdale would serve as "a special assistant on pacification" to Mr. Lodge, who is to arrive in Saigon Friday.

The news that Mr. Lansdale would be returning to Vietnam was received with great interest by both Vietnamese and Americans. An authoritative Vietnamese source said that Premier Nguyen Cao Ky and President Nguyen Cao Ky and President Nguyen Van Thieu were suspicious, but not nervous, about Mr. Lansdale's appointment.

The Vietnamese added that these officials knew Mr. Lansdale only by reputation, which among the Vietnamese is that of a kingmaker. Those who know Mr. Lansdale well were said to be happy at his return.

Lansdale Bolstered Diem

Some historians credit Mr. Lansdale and his team with a major role in helping Ngo Dinh Diem to overcome what appeared to be almost insurmountable difficulties facing him when he took power in 1954, after the Geneva Conference ended the French Indochina war



United Press International

Gen. Edward E. Lansdale

and divided Vietnam into North and South.

Some of Mr. Lansdale's close associates became discouraged with President Diem before he was deposed and killed in the fall of 1963. There is reason to believe that Mr. Lansdale had become discouraged even earlier.

Mr. Lansdale did not serve in Vietnam during the last years of the Diem regime. Most Vietnamese and many Americans believe that he was formally barred from coming here, an order that many of them attribute to Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara and the senior American officials in Vietnam.

According to those who knew him well, Mr. Lansdale was always far more than a man interested in political intrigue and propping up shaky Asian governments. These friends admire him as a fresh and dynamic thinker on "counterinsurgency," or the art of defeating guerrillas, to a great extent through the expansion of popular support among the population.

Mr. Lansdale is assumed to be the "Colonel Hillendale" in the novel "The Ugly American,"

which depicted American setbacks in Asia and lauded the unorthodox but effective Colonel Hillendale.

Pacification May Be Tested

One official said today that it was possible that Mr. Lansdale and his assistants would attempt to apply some of their pacification ideas to Vietnam province but that this was not certain. He added that Mr. Lansdale would not arrive with Mr. Lodge Friday but would follow shortly.

A Vietnamese official said that his Government had not been consulted about Lansdale's appointment but had been informed. He said that the Government had not objected.

There had been a considerable stir here already in expectation of Mr. Lodge's arrival. This was based on rumors that Mr. Lodge would insist on the restoration of a civilian government. A member of the ruling military directory said that the rumors were discussed two weeks ago at a meeting of the military leaders.

The rumors may have been the cause of an outburst by Premier Ky at a news conference Aug. 7 that the Vietnamese should beware of "chains and slavery" in its ties with its allies.

McNamara Opposition Reported

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 18—Administration sources indicated today that Secretary of Defense McNamara and some of his military advisers had opposed the assignment of Mr. Lansdale to Saigon.

Presumably, they were overruled by President Johnson on the advice of Ambassador Lodge.

State Department officials said Mr. Lansdale had been authorized to recruit a staff but the list of his assistants was still incomplete and therefore not available for publication.

The objections to Mr. Lansdale at the Pentagon are said to be based on his service in Vietnam a decade ago, a period of frictions between him and regular chains of military command. He has a reputation for individual and unorthodox forms of diplomacy but no specific examples of conflict could be obtained here today.